

Alona Lebedieva: Democracy and Freedom Always Require Strong Leaders

KYIV, UKRAINE, December 18, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The 2024 Sakharov Prize was awarded on December 17, and this year's laureates were Venezuelan leaders Edmundo González Urrutia and María Corina Machado. Machado, represented at the event by her daughter Ana Corina Sosa, was elected as the opposition candidate for president of Venezuela in 2023, but was disqualified by the regime. Her successor, Edmundo González Urrutia, was forced to flee the country under threat of arrest in July 2024 after challenging electoral fraud and was granted asylum in Spain.



Alona Lebedieva

This year's Sakharov Prize symbolizes global support for those who continue to fight for freedom and justice, even in the face of repression. According to Alyona Lebedeva, founder of the Aurum charity and the European non-profit Aurum Charity Foundation, the laureates Maria Corina Machado and Edmundo González Urrutia embody the courage that can inspire nations in the most difficult times.

Opening the ceremony, European Parliament President Roberta Metzola [emphasized](#): "The fight for freedom is never in vain, and the European Parliament is proud to support it." This award is not only a recognition of courage, but also a call for the world to unite around democratic ideals.

Maria Corina Machado is an example of how a strong woman can lead a democratic movement and inspire millions. Despite persecution and disqualification, she continues to lead her people.

"Her struggle echoes the role of Ukrainian women — volunteers, doctors, military personnel, who prove every day that female leadership is the driving force of our victory," said Alona Lebedieva.

The history of Venezuela reminds Ukraine of a common challenge — the struggle for independence and freedom. Today, when Ukraine is paying an incredible price for its sovereignty, it is important to support all nations that strive for freedom from dictatorship and justice.

“This award is not only a recognition of courage, but also a reminder of the world’s responsibility to those who risk their lives every day for the sake of the future. I believe that next time we will see among the laureates Ukrainians whose voice is a symbol of our invincibility,” concluded Alona Lebedieva.

Background.

The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought is an annual award established by the European Parliament in 1988. Named after Soviet physicist and human rights activist Andrei Sakharov, it is awarded to individuals, groups, or organizations who have made exceptional contributions to the struggle for human rights, freedom of speech, and democracy.

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